



## Experimental Permit Requested for Product That Kills Zebra and Quagga Mussels

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MADISON – The public can comment until Thursday, June 19, on a request for an experimental use permit for a biological pesticide that kills zebra and quagga mussels.

The U.S. Geological Survey has requested the permit to test whether Zequanox® Mussel Control, produced by Marrone Bio Innovations™, is effective against the invasive mussels in open water such as ponds and lakes. It is already registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Wisconsin for use in enclosed or confined waters against these species.

Under the conditions of the permit, up to 20 kg (about 44 pounds) of Zequanox® would be applied once in Keyes Lake, Florence County between July 15 and Aug. 15. It would be applied in six enclosures, each 27 square meters (about 32 square yards). The barriers would be removed 6-24 hours after application. An environmental enforcement specialist from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection would observe the application.

The product is a dry powder made from killed bacteria that the mussels filter out of the water as a food source. It works by disrupting their digestive systems. It is highly specific to these species of mussels, is nontoxic to mammals and birds, and is extremely low in toxicity to other water species. It stops acting within hours and degrades rapidly and completely.

Zebra and quagga mussels are non-native species that out compete native species of clams. They reproduce in high numbers and may clog inflow and outflow pipes and cause bacterial growth that fouls beaches.

Under the experimental use permit process, the agriculture department may authorize uses of pesticides for research. The department has completed an environmental assessment on the proposal and found no potential environmental harm that would require any risk mitigation measures beyond those listed on the product label.

For a copy of the assessment, call or email Robby Personette, 608-224-4542, [robby.personette@wi.gov](mailto:robby.personette@wi.gov). The assessment can also be viewed in the Agricultural Resource Management Division at the department weekdays 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The address is 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, 53718-6777. Comments should be emailed or mailed to Robby Personette at the above addresses. Those received by 4 p.m. June 19 will become part of the preliminary environmental assessment record.

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